

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

8 1. (Currently Amended) A method of managing a computer information database that  
9 contains computer profile data for computers, the method including A method of operating a  
10 profile group managing server for managing a computer information database comprising the  
11 steps of:

12  
13 A. determining, by said profile group managing server, a multiple node tree structure  
14 of groups for the a set of computers, in which each node is a group level, and a top level is a  
15 root, based on primary grouping criteria and secondary grouping criteria that correspond to  
16 selected computer profile data for each computer, said computer profile data including one or  
17 more of hardware and software configuration, hot fixes, user defined entries and performance  
18 data;

19 B. including specifying in a group mapping table in the computer information  
20 database, one or more fields for the primary grouping criteria and one or more fields for the  
21 secondary grouping criteria; wherein said secondary grouping criteria may be unrelated to  
22 said primary grouping criteria, and including in those fields, in respective table records,  
23 values corresponding to the selected computer profile data that are utilized in the primary  
24 grouping criteria and the secondary grouping criteria with the values associated with either or  
25 both of the primary grouping criteria and the secondary grouping criteria being ranges that  
26 extend between a selected high value and a selected low values, wherein said ranges are  
27 inclusive and include the high value, the low value and values therebetween wherein said  
28 values therebetween include all values that are less than the high value, but greater than the  
29 low value; and wherein certain specific values for said primary grouping criteria and said  
30 secondary grouping criteria together uniquely identify one or more particular computers;

31 C. further including specifying, in the respective table records, information that  
32 identifies the groups to which the computers that satisfy the primary and secondary criteria  
33 are assigned;

34 D. receiving, at said profile group managing server, from each computer in the set of  
35 computers, for inclusion in the database, computer profile data from a plurality of computers;

36        E. for the profile data received from a given computer, the profile group managing  
37 server performs the following:

38            extracting the selected profile data that are utilized in the primary groupings  
39 and the secondary groupings,

40            querying the group mapping table to determine if the extracted profile data  
41 correspond to or fall within the ranges of the respective values that are included in the  
42 primary grouping fields and the secondary grouping fields in any of the records in the table,  
43 and

44            if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default group,  
45            if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the group  
46 that is named in the record,

47            if the query results in multiple table records that include secondary low  
48 values, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a first  
49 predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned, or

50            if the query results in multiple records and there are no corresponding  
51 secondary low values in the records, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the  
52 record that is in a second predetermined position in the order in which the records are  
53 returned; and

54        F. manipulating the computer profile data from the database and producing, for a  
55 selected group level, reports that contain summaries of certain or all of the attributes of the  
56 computers that are in the selected group level or below in the tree.

1        2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein one or more table records includes secondary  
2 grouping values set to NULL.

1        3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the respective values associated  
2 with the primary grouping criteria are ranges and the step of determining if the extracted data  
3 correspond to the respective values further includes determining if the corresponding

4 extracted data falls within one below a high limit and above a low limit of the primary  
5 grouping ranges.

1 4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3 wherein the values associated with the  
2 secondary grouping criteria are ranges and the step of determining if the extracted data  
3 correspond to the values further includes determining if the corresponding extracted data of  
4 interest falls below a high limit and above a low limit of the within one of the secondary  
5 grouping ranges.

1 5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of querying further includes  
2 comprises determining if the extracted data corresponds to the primary grouping criteria and  
3 a secondary low value of NULL or the empty string.

1 6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the primary and secondary  
2 grouping criteria correspond to user-specified values of the selected computer profile data.

1 7. (Currently Amended) A method of managing a computer information database that  
2 contains computer profile data for computers, the method including A method of operating a  
3 profile group managing server for managing a computer information database comprising:  
4 the steps of:

5  
6 A. determining, by said profile group managing server, a multiple node tree structure  
7 of groups for the computers, in which each node is a group level, and a top level is a root,  
8 based on primary grouping criteria that correspond to ranges of values of selected computer  
9 profile data for each computer, said computer profile data including one or more of hardware  
10 and software configuration and performance data;

11 B. including, specifying in a group mapping table in the computer information  
12 database, fields for the ranges of values of the selected computer profile data that are the  
13 primary grouping criteria, wherein said ranges are inclusive and include a selected high  
14 value, a selected low value, and values there between, wherein said values there between

15     include all values that are less than the high value, but greater than the low value; and  
16     including in those fields, in respective table records, high and low values for the ranges of the  
17     selected computer profile data wherein certain specific values for said primary grouping  
18     criteria and said secondary grouping criteria together uniquely identify one or more particular  
19     computers;

20           C. further including, in the table records, information that identifies the groups to  
21     which the computers that satisfy the primary grouping criteria are assigned;

22           D. receiving, at said profile group managing server, from each computer in the set of  
23     computers, for inclusion in the database, computer profile data from a plurality of  
24     computers for that particular computer;

25           E. for the profile data received from a given computer, the profile group managing  
26     server performing the following:

27               extracting the selected profile data that is utilized in the primary grouping;  
28               querying the group mapping table to determine if the extracted data fall within the  
29     ranges of values that are included in the primary grouping fields in any of the table records;  
30     and

31               if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default group;  
32               if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the group that is  
33     named in the record; or

34               if the query results in multiple table records, assigning the computer to the group that  
35     is named in the record that is in a first predetermined position in the order in which the  
36     records are returned; and

37           F. manipulating the computer profile data from the database and producing, for a  
38     selected group level, reports that summarize the attributes of the computers that are in the  
39     selected group level or below in the tree.

1     8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 further including the steps of comprising:  
2               including, in the table, fields that correspond to a range of values for computer profile  
3     data that are selected as secondary grouping criteria to assign the computers to groups for

4 profile data reporting, and including in the fields in respective table records high and low  
5 values for the secondary grouping computer profile data of interest, and  
6 for the profile data from a given computer  
7 further extracting data that correspond to the computer profile data selected  
8 for the secondary grouping criteria,  
9 further querying the table to determine if the further extracted data fall within  
10 the secondary grouping criteria ranges included in the table records, and  
11 if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the group  
12 that is named in the record,  
13 if the query results in multiple table records that include secondary low  
14 values, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a  
15 second predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned,  
16 if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default group, or  
17 if the query results in multiple records and there are no corresponding  
18 secondary low values in the records, assigning the computer to the group that is  
19 named in the record that is in a third predetermined position in the order in which the  
20 records are returned.

1 9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein ~~the step of~~ querying further ~~includes~~  
2 comprises determining if the extracted data corresponds to the primary grouping criteria and  
3 a secondary low value of NULL or the empty string.

1 10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the first predetermined position in  
2 the order of the records is the first record found and the second predetermined position in the  
3 order of records is the last record found.

1 11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the second predetermined position  
2 in the order of the records is the first record found and the third predetermined position in the  
3 order of records is the last record found.

1    12. (Cancelled)

1    13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12-1 wherein ~~the step of~~ grouping further  
2    ~~includes~~ comprises re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with  
3    different user-specified primary and secondary grouping criteria ~~by altering the ranges~~.

1    14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12-1 wherein ~~the step of~~ grouping further  
2    ~~includes~~ comprises grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with  
3    primary and secondary grouping criteria that correspond to computer profile data that  
4    represents selected physical locations of users.

1    15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14-1 wherein ~~the further step of~~ grouping  
2    ~~includes~~ comprises re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with  
3    primary and secondary grouping criteria that correspond to computer profile data that  
4    represents selected structures within the underlying organization of users.

1    16. (Cancelled)

1    17. (Cancelled)

1    18. (Cancelled)

1    19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein ~~the further step of~~ grouping  
2    ~~includes~~ comprises re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with  
3    primary and secondary grouping criteria that correspond to other selected structures  
4    within the underlying organization of ~~users~~ a company.

1    20. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium embodying a profile  
2    group managing server having stored thereon and running profile group managing  
3    software for executing a method of managing configured as a database management  
4    system for producing reports of attributes of collections of computers using computer  
5    profile data contained in a database, the system including by executing instructions for  
6    performing the steps comprising:

7                A. a profile group managing server programmed with instructions collecting  
8    means for:

9                A, collecting, at a profile group managing server, profile data for a given  
10   computer in a set of computers, into the database; which is retained in computer storage  
11   media;

12                B. a profile group manager running on an associated computer for  
13                grouping the computers into a specified tree-structure of groups-groups in  
14   the database in which each node of the tree is a group level, and a top level is a root,  
15   based on primary and secondary grouping criteria that correspond to respective values of  
16   selected computer profile data with the values associated with either or both of the  
17   primary grouping criteria and the secondary grouping criteria being ranges that extend  
18   between a selected high value and a selected low values, wherein said ranges are  
19   inclusive and include the high value, the low value and values therebetween wherein said  
20   values therebetween include all values that are less than the high value, but greater than  
21   the low value;

22                wherein certain specific values for said primary grouping criteria and said  
23   secondary grouping criteria together uniquely identify one or more particular computers,  
24   wherein said groupings in said multiple node tree reflect at least one of a company's  
25   organizational structure and its underlying physical set up;;

26                C. for the profile data received from a given computer, the profile group  
27   managing server performs the following:

28                   extracting the selected profile data that are utilized in the primary  
29                   groupings and the secondary groupings,  
30                   querying the group mapping table to determine if the extracted profile data  
31                   correspond to or fall within the ranges of the respective values that are included in the  
32                   primary grouping fields and the secondary grouping fields in any of the records in the  
33                   table, and  
34                   if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default  
35                   group,  
36                   if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the  
37                   group that is named in the record,  
38                   if the query results in multiple table records that include secondary low  
39                   values, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a first  
40                   predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned, or  
41                   if the query results in multiple records and there are no corresponding  
42                   secondary low values in the records, assigning the computer to the group that is named in  
43                   the record that is in a second predetermined position in the order in which the records are  
44                   returned; and  
45                   C. the profile group manager maintains the group information in the database; in  
46                   computer storage media;  
47                   D. manipulating the data in the database to produce reports that summarize the  
48                   attributes of the computers in a given group level and the levels below on the tree; and  
49                   E. providing the reports to a user.

1       21. (Cancelled)

1       22. (New)   A system for managing computer profile data, comprising:  
2                   a profile group managing server configured to retrieve computer profile data from  
3                   computers;

4           a set of computers, each computer being configured with a client profile software  
5       module that maintains profile data for that computer, and uploads computer profile data to  
6       said profile group managing server; and

7           a computer information database configured with a mapping table having at least  
8       three fields including a primary profile value to match field, a secondary profile value to  
9       match field, and a group path field, wherein said group profile managing server determines  
10      how to include a computer in a group by extracting from uploaded profile data, that data  
11      which corresponds to primary grouping criteria and secondary grouping criteria being ranges  
12      that extend between a selected high value and a selected low value, wherein said ranges are  
13      inclusive and include a high value, a low value and values therebetween wherein said values  
14      therebetween include all values that are less than the high value, but greater than the low  
15      value.

1     23. (New)   The method as defined in Claim 1 wherein said hardware component  
2       information includes one or more of manufacturer, system BIOS, CPU, bus, memory,  
3       hard disks, local and shared, logical and physical, tape drives, video cards, sounds cards,  
4       printers, network and operating systems.

1     24. (New)   The method as defined in Claim 1 wherein said software version  
2       information about applications includes one or more of manufacturer, product name,  
3       version number and install directory and said performance data includes one ore more of  
4       network activity, CPU utilization, number of reboots, and hard drive SMART failures.

1     25. (New)   The method as defined in claim 1 wherein said group profile managing  
2       server organizes the set of computers to reflect the organization of the company, and  
3       underlying physical set up, such as by using identifiers including at least one of PC Name  
4       and corporate department including one of sales, marketing, headquarters and location.

1     26. (New)   The method as defined in claim 25 wherein said PC Names include three  
2       letters followed by four digits, said three letters denoting organizational responsibilities  
3       of the computer's user, such that said numbers together uniquely identify one or both of a  
4       particular computer and the computer's user.